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BENJAMIN D. HYAM.

APRIL 17, 1858.

Mr. CURTIS, from the Committee on Military Affairs, made the following

REPORT.

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the memorial of Benjamin D. Hyam, have had the same under consideration, and submit the following report :

The memorialist presents that he was a clerk in the Quartermaster's Department of the United States army, in the year 1847, in the employ of Captain A. R. Hatzel, of the United States army. That he accompanied the army to Mexico, during the war which was then pending, making some stay at Brazos Santiago, and was at Vera Cruz during the siege, capture and occupancy of that city by our American troops until October 31, 1847. That on several occasions, and for many days at each point, he was called on to bear arms and do military duty in apprehension of attack from Mexican forces ; and that during the whole time he was exposed to the diseases and dangers of a campaign in the country of a belligerent foe ; and that he is therefore entitled to the bounty granted to soldiers who served in the Mexican war.

If the petitioner were regularly enrolled and mustered into the service, and served for a period of fourteen days as a soldier, proof of these facts would, in the opinion of the committee, bring the memorialist within the provision of existing laws ; but occasional rallies of the various employés of the army have not been regarded in the same light as those taking on themselves all the hardships, duties, and exposures incident to the regular, volunteer, or enlisted soldier. Contractors, clerks, wagon-masters, and many other persons are necessary to the army ; but they are hired at different and better wages ; have more control of their own stay or departure, and generally find better accommodations than those who are under the slender compensation, plain ration, and " rules and regulations " of the United States army. While clerks received fifty or one hundred and fifty dollars a month, volunteers received only seven or eight dollars a month. There was a radical difference, therefore, in the classes of service, and the government has therefore, at all times, perserved a difference in making acknowledgments and rewards.

There may be cases of extraordinary merit which would present occasion for including a clerk within all favors bestowed on soldiers ; but although this is a case of much merit, it does not, in the opinion of your committee, justify a departure from a reasonable and wholesome rule.

W46

29 Sept 1967





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